

Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War

*Campaign Strategy, International
Finance, and Domestic Politics*

JAMES D. TRACY

University of Minnesota



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© James D. Tracy 2002

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2002

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Bembo 11/12 pt. *System* \TeX 2 ϵ [TB]

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Tracy, James D.

Emperor Charles V, impresario of war : campaign strategy, international finance, and
domestic politics / James D. Tracy.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-81431-6

1. Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, 1500-1558. 2. Europe - Economic
conditions - 16th century. 3. Holy Roman Empire - Kings and rulers - Biography.
4. Holy Roman Empire - History - Charles V, 1505-1555. 5. Europe - History,
Military - 1492-1648. 6. Finance, Public - Holy Roman Empire - History - 16th
century. I. Title.

D180.5 .T73 2002

943'.03'092 - dc21

[B]

2002023395

ISBN 0 521 81431 6 hardback

Contents

| | |
|---|----------------|
| <i>List of Illustrations</i> | <i>page</i> ix |
| <i>List of Tables</i> | xi |
| <i>Acknowledgments</i> | xiii |
| <i>List of Abbreviations</i> | xv |
| Introduction | I |
| Part 1 Strategy and Finance | 17 |
| 1 The Grand Strategy of Charles V | 20 |
| 2 The Habsburg-Valois Struggle: Italy, 1515–1528 | 39 |
| 3 The Search for Revenue, I: The Hard Roads of Fiscal Reform | 50 |
| 4 The Search for Revenue, II: Parliamentary Subsidies | 67 |
| 5 The Search for Credit: Charles and His Bankers | 91 |
| Part 2 Impresario of War: Charles's Campaigns, 1529–1552 | 109 |
| 6 Finding Uses for an Army: Charles in Italy, 1529–1530 | 114 |
| 7 Crusades in Austria and the Mediterranean, 1532–1535 | 133 |
| 8 Failures in Provence and at Prevesa and Algiers, 1536–1541 | 158 |
| 9 Charles's Grand Plan, 1543–1544 | 183 |
| 10 The First Schmalkaldic War, 1546–1547 | 204 |
| 11 The Second Schmalkaldic War and the Assault on Metz, 1552 | 229 |
| Part 3 War Taxation: Parliaments of the Core Provinces of the Low Countries, Naples, and Castile | 249 |
| 12 Fiscal Devolution and War Taxation in the Low Countries | 254 |
| 13 Baronial Politics and War Finance in the Kingdom of Naples | 274 |

| | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 14 | Town Autonomy, Noble Magistrates, and War Taxation in Castile | 289 |
| | Conclusions | 305 |
| | <i>Bibliography</i> | 317 |
| | <i>Index</i> | 329 |

Illustrations

MAPS

| | |
|--|--------|
| Int.1. Habsburg dominions in Europe, 1555 (based on Brandi, <i>Kaiser Karl V</i>) | page 3 |
| 3.1. The core provinces: Flanders, Brabant, and Holland | 52 |
| 3.2. The Kingdom of Naples | 55 |
| 3.3. The Kingdom of Castile | 64 |
| 6.1. Northern Italy, with Alpine passes, 1530 | 118 |
| 7.1. The Danube campaign of 1532 | 140 |
| 7.2. Habsburg and Ottoman Empires at war in the Mediterranean | 142 |
| 8.1. The Provence campaign of 1536 | 162 |
| 9.1. The Rhineland campaign of 1543 | 189 |
| 9.2. Charles's invasion of northern France, 1544 | 193 |
| 10.1. The First Schmalkaldic War, 1546–1547 | 211 |
| 11.1. Charles's retreat to Villach | 236 |

FIGURES

| | |
|--|-----|
| 5.1. Jan Ossaert, <i>Francisco de los Cobos</i> , Getty Museum, Los Angeles | 93 |
| 6.1. Titian, <i>La Emperatriz Doña Isabella</i> , Prado, Madrid | 115 |
| 7.1. Anonymous, <i>Andrea Doria with a Cat</i> , Palazzo Doria, Genoa | 136 |
| 7.2. <i>Siege of Goletta</i> , in the 1555 Antwerp edition of <i>Historiarum sui Temporis</i> by Paolo Giovio, University of Minnesota Library | 148 |
| 7.3. <i>Tunis Captured</i> , in the 1555 edition of <i>Kurze Verzeichnis wie Keyser Carolus der V in Africa . . .</i> , Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel | 150 |

- | | | |
|-------|--|-----|
| 8.1. | <i>Siege of Algiers</i> , in the 1555 Antwerp edition of <i>Historiarum sui Temporis</i> by Paolo Giovio, University of Minnesota Library | 175 |
| 10.1. | <i>The Ingolstadt Cannonade</i> , in the 1550 Antwerp edition of <i>Commentariorum de Bello Germanico</i> by Luis de Ávila, University of Minnesota Library | 212 |
| 10.2. | <i>Spaniards Wading the Elbe at Mühlberg</i> , in the 1550 Antwerp edition of <i>Commentariorum de Bello Germanico</i> by Luis de Ávila, University of Minnesota Library | 216 |
| 10.3. | Titian, <i>Charles V as the Victor at Mühlberg</i> , Prado, Madrid | 218 |

Tables

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| 5.1. Lenders to be repaid by the treasury of Castile, 1521–1555 | <i>page</i> 101 |
| 5.2. Revenue structure of Charles V's lands | 102 |
| II.1. Warfare and loans against the treasury of Castile during Charles's reign | 110 |
| 8.1. Sources of funds for Charles's campaigns, 1529–1541 | 182 |
| 9.1. Castile's revenues, 1543–1548, and <i>cambios</i> for Charles remitted 1543–1544 | 203 |
| II.1. Loans charged against the treasury of Castile in 1552 | 245 |
| II.2. Sources of funds for Charles's campaigns, 1543–1552 | 247 |
| III.1. Average annual subsidies of the core provinces, Naples, and Castile, 1519–1553 | 250 |
| III.2. Largest parliamentary grants during Charles's reign | 251 |
| 12.1. Charges against the ordinary subsidies of the Low Countries in 1531 | 263 |
| 12.2. Sources of funds raised by the three core provinces, 1543–1544 | 266 |

Chapter 1

The Grand Strategy of Charles V

Military historians working on periods as far apart as the Roman Empire and the twentieth century have adopted the term “grand strategy” to denote the highest level of thinking about the interests of the state. To quote a recent definition,

Strategy is the art of controlling and utilizing the resources of a nation – or a coalition of nations – including its armed forces, to the end that its vital interests shall be effectively promoted and secured against enemies, actual, potential, or merely presumed. The highest type of strategy – sometimes called grand strategy – is that which so integrates the policies and armaments of the nation that the resort to war is either rendered unnecessary or is undertaken with the maximum chance of victory.¹

If one applies this definition strictly, especially the implication that the wealth of a nation is a “resource” to be enhanced by government policy, Charles V cannot be said to have had a grand strategy. His sister, Mary of Hungary, regent of the Low Countries (1531–1555), clearly grasped the importance of strengthening the commercial relations of the Netherlands; for example, she tried to discourage Charles from going to war to put his niece on the throne of Denmark, a scheme that had little chance of success, and threatened to disrupt altogether Holland’s vital Baltic trade.² Similarly,

¹ A quotation from Edward Mead Earle, *The Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton, 1943), viii, in Paul Kennedy, “Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Toward a Broader Definition,” in his *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven, Conn., 1991), 2.

² Daniel Doyle, “The Heart and Stomach of a Man but the Body of a Woman: Mary of Hungary and The Exercise of Political Power in Early Modern Europe,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1996, chap. 6. Charles’s sister Isabella had married King Christian II who was driven from his throne in 1523. During the so-called Counts’ War of 1533–1536, Charles ordered the mobilization of Low Countries shipping to carry to Denmark an army enrolled under the banner of Frederick of Wittelsbach, brother of the Count Palatine of the Rhine, and husband of Dorothea, daughter of Isabella and Christian II.

Francis I had ambitious plans for enriching the Mediterranean trade of his kingdom by making French-held Savona a rival to the busy port of Genoa.³ But there is, to my knowledge, nothing in Charles's correspondence to suggest an awareness that the trade or agriculture of his realms was an asset to be nurtured and protected, for the future profit of the crown. He seems not to have seen beyond the fact that wealth of subjects could be called upon to support the great deeds of princes, as in a speech to the Council of Castile in 1529, explaining his decision to embark on a military campaign in Italy: "It is very pusillanimous for a prince to forgo undertaking a heroic course of action merely because money is wanting, for in matters of honor a prince must not only risk his own person but also pledge the revenues of his treasury."⁴

Geoffrey Parker has applied a more limited concept of the term to Charles's son Philip. As against critics of the idea of a "grand strategy" for Philip's reign, Parker acknowledges that neither Philip nor his councillors had a "comprehensive master-plan." But one can discern "a global strategic vision" in the initiatives of the king's government, as when he ordered simultaneous *visitas* or inspection tours of Spain's three Italian provinces, Milan, Naples, and Sicily (1559). Through his councils Philip had a systematic procedure for sifting and evaluating incoming reports about threats to Spain's interests in various parts of Europe and overseas. There was also a systematic collection of information that could be useful in the governance of his realms, as in the twenty sectional maps the king had made of Iberia,⁵ which were "by far the largest European maps of their day to be based on a detailed ground survey." Unlike "more successful warlords," such as his great rival, King Henry IV of France (1589–1610), or his own father, Charles V, Philip did not appreciate the strategic importance of "seeing the situation in a theater [of war] for oneself," or of "building bonds of confidence and trust with theater commanders through regular personal meetings." But Philip did inherit from his father what Parker calls a "blueprint for empire" to guide his thinking and that of his ministers. This was the so-called political testament of 1548, written for Philip's instruction, "a highly perceptive survey of the prevailing international situation, and of the Grand Strategy best suited to preserve Philip's inheritance intact." Because Philip's possessions were physically separated from one another, and the object of widespread jealousy, he must take care to maintain friends and informants in all areas, so as to understand the actions of other states and anticipate danger.⁶

³ See Chapter 6.

⁴ Santa Cruz, *Crónica del Emperador Carlos V*, II, 456.

⁵ From 1580, Philip was also king of Portugal.

⁶ Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven, Conn., 1998), 2–6, 9–10, 21–25, 40, 59–63, 77–79. For the text of Charles's testament of 18 January 1548, *Corpus Documental*, Letter

It makes sense to apply this qualified idea of a grand strategy to Charles's reign also, but only if a further adjustment is made. Although Philip's dominions were indeed scattered, the policy of the monarchy was governed by Spanish interests. This was not yet so in Charles's time, primarily because the crown he wore as Holy Roman Emperor was more prestigious than the crowns of Castile and Aragón, and implied responsibilities lying well beyond the zone of Spanish concerns. Hence one cannot say of Charles that his thinking about war and peace was undergirded by a sense of "national" interest. Moreover, although panegyrists compared him with the Caesars of Rome, his empire, unlike theirs, never made up a contiguous territory with common interests and common enemies.

The lands Charles ruled at least in name⁷ were a motley collection making up nearly half of Europe.⁸ In Spain he was (from 1516) king of Castile and Aragón by right of his maternal grandparents, the Catholic kings, Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragón. In the Low Countries, he ruled a fistful of provinces inherited from his paternal grandmother, Mary, the duchess of Burgundy, including Flanders, Brabant, and Holland. Across the French border, he claimed to be the rightful duke of Burgundy, even though the duchy was reincorporated into France in 1477. In Italy, he was king of Naples (including Sicily), thanks to the conquest of that realm by his Aragonese great-grandfather, King Alfonso V (d. 1458). Meanwhile, and with minimal attention on Charles's part,⁹ his subjects added the great Aztec and Inca realms to Castile's overseas possessions. Finally, in the vast and ramshackle Holy Roman Empire, where each prince and city-state ruled more or less without interference from the emperor, Charles and his younger brother Ferdinand were heirs to Habsburg Austria, yet another collection of separate provinces. Upon the death of their grandfather, Emperor Maximilian I (1519), Charles was able to succeed him by vote of the empire's seven prince-electors, but only thanks to indecently large bribes advanced by Augsburg's great banking houses.

How does one understand the interests of a prince ruling so many lands, whose discernible interests were often in direct conflict with one another?

CCCLXXIX, II, 569–592; and for the place of this document in a series of such testaments, Karl Brandt, "Die politische Testamente Karls V," II (1930), 258–293, in "Berichte und Studien zur Geschichte Karls V," nos. I–XIX, *Nachrichten von der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse*, 1930–1941, hereafter abbreviated as "Berichte."

⁷ The order in which his titles were listed varied slightly with the secretary's home base; for a Spanish version, Rodríguez-Salgado, *The Changing Face of Empire*, 33.

⁸ Wim Blockmans, "The Emperor's Subjects," in Soly, *Charles V*, 234; in a western and central Europe estimated to have had 70 million people in 1550, those who could be called subjects of Charles numbered about 28 million.

⁹ For Charles's legislation on the Indies, Ciriaco Pérez Bustamante, "Actividad legislativa de Carlos V, en orden a las Indias," in *Charles-Quint et son temps* (Paris, 1959), 113–121.

Or what were Charles's interests as holder of an imperial crown to which no lands or revenues were attached, only a vague prestige that evoked the jealousy of other crowned heads? There were no precedents to fall back on, because no prince in living memory – indeed, no one since Alexander the Great, or Charlemagne¹⁰ – had ever ruled such a large and heterogenous complex of territories. Nonetheless, Charles groped his way toward a settled understanding of his interests, and those of the “House of Austria,” including a grasp of European affairs that in his mature years was indeed highly perceptive. To be sure, this was not a wisdom gained in a single campaign, or a single season of hearing ambassadors' reports read in council. The first time Charles wrote down his thoughts about the choices facing him (February–March 1525), he gave no evidence of ideas more complex than the traditional chivalric sense of honor that required him, as he thought, to undertake an expedition to Italy.¹¹ The young emperor had to learn from his councillors, especially Mercurino Gattinara, grand chancellor of the empire. It will thus be useful to look first at the advisers who surrounded Charles, before examining the elements of a grand strategy that he drew from their counsel and, in time, reformulated in his own terms.

Charles's Advisers

From an early age Charles took governing seriously. France's King Francis I (d. 1547) is said to have been happiest when “riding to the hounds, tilting in a joust or performing in a masque.”¹² Charles, though not adverse to taking his pleasures, maintained throughout his life a daily routine that included meeting with one or another of his councils, hearing reports from abroad read aloud, dictating letters or dispatches, and, in special cases, writing out long missives. Even when afflicted with gout, he used his distinctive hand as a means of underlining his instructions; recipients knew at once they had been favored with such a letter and were meant to be impressed.¹³

¹⁰ The example of Charlemagne's conquest and subjugation of the stubbornly pagan Saxons was evoked as a precedent for what Charles might have to do to stubborn Lutherans, concentrated in roughly the same part of Germany: Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggi to Charles, end of June 1530, *Staatspapiere*, Document 8, 41–50; cf. Ferdinand to Charles, 1 February 1531, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 451, III, 17: “Y... la tierra de Saxonia ha sido en tiempos passados rreduzida dos vezes a la fe.”

¹¹ For text and commentary, Karl Brandi, “Eigenhändige Aufzeichnungen Karls V aus dem Anfang des Jahres 1525,” in “Berichte,” IX, 1933, 220–260; see also Federico Chabod, *Lo stato e la vita religiosa a Milano nell' epoca di Carlo V* = *Opere* (5 vols., Turin, 1964–1985), III, 133–135.

¹² R. J. Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I* (Cambridge, 1994), 107.

¹³ See, eg., the gratitude of Charles de Lannoy, viceroy of Naples (1522–1527), to have letters in the emperor's own hand: to Charles, 20 April 1525, Lanz, Letter 67, I, 160, and 25 May 1526,

His earliest mentors were men who had received their political and military education at the Habsburg-Burgundian court in Brussels. Gattinara, a Piedmontese, came to the Low Countries with Charles's aunt, Margaret of Austria, widowed duchess of Savoy, for her first term as regent (1506–1514). Upon Gattinara's death in 1530, Nicholas Perrenot, lord of Granvelle in Franche-Compté (d. 1550), succeeded him as the emperor's chief adviser for the affairs of France and the empire, though not as chancellor of the empire (this position was not filled again in Charles's reign). Other key advisers had been chamberlains to Charles in his boyhood, hunting with him in the Zoniënbos outside Brussels: Guillaume de Croy, lord of Chièvres in Hainaut, the grand chamberlain (d. 1521); Philibert of Châlons, prince of Orange (d. 1530); Orange's son-in-law and heir, Count Henry of Nassau (d. 1538), lord of the Low Countries lands of the German princely house from which he came; Charles de Lannoy, lord of Molembaix (d. 1527); Lodewijk van Vlaanderen, lord of Praet (d. 1551), representing an illegitimate branch of the old comital house of Flanders; Adrien de Croy, lord of Roeulx, the brother of Chièvres; Jean Hannart, lord of Likerke; and Charles de Poupet, lord of La Chaulx.¹⁴

Only slowly did these "Burgundians" give way in the inner circle to Castilians. There were first of all the ecclesiastics, who traditionally occupied high positions at the court in Valladolid, notably Alonso de Fonseca (d. 1534), archbishop of Toledo and president of the Consejo de Estado or Council of Castile. Juan Pardo de Tavera (d. 1545), archbishop of Santiago, was especially effective at building a clientele among servants of the crown at various levels.¹⁵ He succeeded Fonseca both as primate of Spain (archbishop of Toledo) and president of the council. Though men from grandee families – the highest rank of the nobility – were excluded from the councils of state in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, there were a few for whom Charles made exceptions, including three men from the House of Alba: Fadrique Álvarez de Toledo (d. 1531), the second duke of Alba; his younger son, Pedro Álvarez de Toledo (d. 1553), marquess of Villafranca; and Villafranca's nephew, Fernando Álvarez de Toledo (d. 1581), the third

Lanz, Letter 89, I, 210–211. Ferdinand's suggestion that Charles need not trouble writing in his own hand is taken by Wolfram as a hint that Ferdinand, following his election (1530) as King of the Romans and thus as designated successor in the empire, now had less need of direction from Charles: Ferdinand to Charles, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 669, IV, 639.

¹⁴ For biographical sketches, Michel Baelde, *De Collaterale Raden onder Karel V en Filips II, 1531–1578, Verhandelungen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schoone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Letteren*, XXVII (Brussels, 1965).

¹⁵ On rivalry between different *bandas* or *partidos* within the councils of Castile, José Martínez Millán, ed., *Instituciones y elites de poder en la monarquía hispana durante el siglo XVI* (Madrid, 1992); see also his "La Corte de Carlos V: Corrientes espirituales en la casa de Castilla del emperador," in Blockmans and Mout, *The World of Charles V*.

duke of Alba.¹⁶ Some lesser nobles also rose to positions in the inner circle, like Juan de Silva, count of Cifuentes, as did officials of non-noble birth like Lope de Soria, who began his career as a secretary to the Council of Aragón, and the adviser on whom Charles came to rely most, Francisco de los Cobos (d. 1547), initially a secretary to the Council of Castile. Cobos gained the emperor's confidence by his ability to find, within Castile's labyrinthine financial system, revenues that were not as yet pledged, thus permitting the flow of loans to continue. Like Tavera, he was adept at building a coterie of supporters, and the two informal groupings of courtiers and officials formed a single *banda* or faction in the eyes of outsiders.¹⁷

After he concluded an alliance with the emperor in 1528, Andrea Doria (d. 1560), the admiral from a family of Genoese bankers, was Charles's most trusted adviser on maritime affairs, but he seldom attended on the emperor in person, and was never quite accepted by those in the inner circle as one of their own.¹⁸ The key ambassadorial posts were usually awarded to insiders, like Granvelle for France, Soria for Genoa, and Cifuentes for the papal court in Rome. When Ferdinand was required to send an envoy to the Sublime Porte in Istanbul, Charles prevailed upon his brother to appoint first Cornelis de Schepper (a protégé of Gattinara) and later Geraard Veltwijk (a protégé of Granvelle); both were humanist scholars who had risen through the ranks to become members of the Council of State in Brussels.¹⁹ Finally, for managing his affairs in Italy, Charles depended on members of Aragonese noble families whose presence in the Kingdom of Naples dated from its conquest by Alfonso V (d. 1455): Antonio de Leyva, prince of Ascoli; Ferrante de Avalos, marquis of Pescara (d. 1525); and Pescara's nephew, Alfonso de Avalos, marquess of Vasto. Though repeatedly entrusted with commands in Italy and beyond, these men were never part of the inner circle. For the key post in Italy, the viceroy of Naples, Charles turned to Lannoy (1522–1527), Orange (1527–1530), and Pedro de Toledo (1532–1553) – never a Leyva, a Pescara, or a Vasto (see Chapter 13).

In practice it is sometimes difficult to separate the emperor's personal council – those who attended on him wherever he was – from the councils

¹⁶ William S. Maltby, *Alba: A Biography of Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Third Duke of Alba, 1507–1582* (Berkeley, 1983); Hernando Sanchez, *Castilla y Napoles*.

¹⁷ Keniston, *Francisco de los Cobos*; Granvelle to Cobos, 10 February 1540, Estado, 497.

¹⁸ There is unfortunately no modern biography of Doria, but for an excellent study of Doria (with his kinsmen and rivals) in the context of Genoese politics and Genoese banking, see Pacini, *La Genova di Andrea Doria nell'impero di Carlo V*. See also his "Genoa and the Genoese in the Spanish Imperial System," in Blockmans and Mout, *The World of Charles V*.

¹⁹ Robert Finlay, "Prophecy and Politics in Istanbul: Charles V, Sultan Suleyman, and the Habsburg Embassy of 1533–1534," *Journal of Early Modern History* 2 (1998): 249–272.

of state in his various realms.²⁰ Indeed, the same man, serving in the two capacities, could be pulled in different directions.²¹ On the occasions when those giving their opinions on a particular matter are listed by name, one finds councillors of both types joining in with no apparent differentiation. For example, when Castile's Council of State voted (1528) on whether Charles should engage the king of France in single combat, those voting included four men who had recently come from the Netherlands in Charles's train: Granvelle, Nassau, Praet, and Poupet de la Chaulx. When the Council of State in Brussels gave its advice on whether Charles should seek a personal meeting with the warring kings of France and England (1545), the duke of Alba and Juan de Figueroa, president of Castile's Consejo de Estado, voted along with their Low Countries peers.²² There was nonetheless an important difference between councillors of a realm, interpreting their loyalty to Charles in terms of local interests, and the traveling councillors who were expected to adopt a dynasty-wide perspective. This was probably the reason why Charles never named a Neapolitan as viceroy of Naples.²³

Elements of a Grand Strategy

World Emperor, Leader of Christendom, or Head of the House of Austria?

From an early date, key members of Charles's entourage promoted the idea that their sovereign was marked out by God to be *imperator mundi*, emperor of the whole world. This was apparently why the sixteen-year-old archduke of Burgundy chose as his personal device the Pillars of Hercules (Straits of Gibraltar), an emblem symbolizing not merely the known limits of navigation but also the idea of a metaphorical "No Farther" (*Non Plus Ultra*) setting bounds to human pride. The motto affixed to his device, *Plus Ultra* ("Farther," that is, beyond the Straits of Gibraltar), could refer either to the lands across the sea newly discovered by Spain, or to the

²⁰ Santiago Fernández Conti, "El gobierno de los asuntos y la guerra en Castilla durante el reinado del Emperador Carlos V," in Martínez Millán, *Instituciones y elites de poder*, 73: on leaving Spain for Italy in 1529, Charles decreed that eight members of his council should accompany him, while four others remained behind to serve as Empress Isabella's council of state.

²¹ Maltby, *Alba*, 41: "[Alba's] Castilianism and pride of caste would always be at war with his allegiance to an international and theoretically absolute monarchy."

²² Charles's instructions for Willem van Montfoort, 8 October 1528, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 232, II, 307–308; Alba to Cobos, 4 October 1545, *Corpus Documental*, Letter CCCXXXII, II, 426.

²³ The national prejudices of Charles's advisers were another reason: Pierre de Veyre to Charles, 30 September 1527, Lanz, Letter 101, I, 251–252, passing on the advice of a Castilian long in Spanish service in Naples, Don Hugo de Moncada, viceroy of Sicily, not to name a native to the post, "for all of them together have not the savoir faire of a good half viceroy."

idea that this was a prince who brooked no limits.²⁴ To many politically conscious Europeans, including some of his own subjects,²⁵ Charles seemed in fact the very incarnation of an overweening thirst for domination, an Alexander *redivivus*, not to be satisfied until he had brought the whole earth under his rule. Meanwhile, the struggle for power between Christendom and Islamdom was in the popular imagination projected onto a global stage. Both Christian and Islamic lands were rife with prophecies that a single ruler must come to be master of the whole world, either Charles himself, or his great Ottoman Turkish rival, Sultan Suleyman the Lawgiver (r. 1520–1566).²⁶

Within the inner circle, the chief protagonist of the idea of world empire was Gattinara, Charles's tutor in foreign affairs. Gattinara sought to inculcate political sagacity in the young emperor through nuggetlike aphorisms, like those favored by educators of the day.²⁷ For example, if "Genoa and Milan are the gate and the key for keeping and controlling Italy," then "Italy well and truly subjected to your authority is the seat and scepter for dominating all the world."²⁸ In the language of the period, the Latin *regnum* meant kingship over a particular territory, while the Greek *monarchia* denoted a universal monarchy. Scholars have differing opinions about whether Charles himself embraced Gattinara's vision of *monarchia*,²⁹ but in his mature years he disclaimed such ambition. In a speech before the papal court (1536), apparently not vetted in advance

²⁴ Burke, "Presenting and Re-Presenting Charles, V," 422–425; Earl Rosenthal, "Plus Ultra and the Columnar Device of Emperor Charles V," *Journal of the Wartburg and Courtauld Institutes* 34 (1971): 204–228. The twin pillars of Charles's device became the twin-pillar emblem of Spain's gold reales, later transmuted into the dollar sign.

²⁵ See the opinions of Erasmus of Rotterdam, a typical Netherlander in his suspicions about the ambitions of Charles V and his government, as discussed in James D. Tracy, *Erasmus of the Low Countries* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1996), 171–174.

²⁶ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Du Tage au Gange au XVIe siècle: Vne. Conjuncture Millénariste à l'échelle Eurasiatique," *Annales* 56 (2001): 51–84. Finlay, "Prophecy and Politics in Istanbul." Cf. Erasmus to an Italian correspondent, dated Freiburg, 11 April 1531: "The rumor here – indeed, not a rumor, but public knowledge – is that the Turk will invade Germany with all his forces, to do battle for the great prize, whether Charles or the Turk be monarch [*monarcha*] of the entire globe, for the world cannot any longer bear to have two suns in the sky": P. S. Allen, *Opus Epistolarum Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami* (12 vols., Oxford, 1906–1958), IX, 254 (my translation).

²⁷ The best-known example would be Erasmus, *Adagiorum Chiliades* (Venice: Aldus Manutius, 1508, and Basel: Froben, 1515).

²⁸ Minute of a meeting of Charles's council (November–December 1523) at which Gattinara was present, in "Berichte," XIX, 1941, 165–257, Document 2, 211–213. Cf. Margaret of Austria's appeal to Charles to keep Milan for himself, rather than returning it to the control of Duke Francesco Sforza, because "it is the key to Italy, by which the Kingdom of Naples can be preserved."

²⁹ For a good summary of arguments pro and con, Alfred Kohler, *Karl V, 1500–1558. Eine Biographie* (Munich, 1999), 94–102.

by his advisers, Charles rejected the charge that he sought *monarchia*.³⁰ He was not the aggressor, but merely the defender of his inherited lands against attack by France and other enemies. He was also, as emperor, the paladin of Catholic Christendom, responsible to God for its defense against the machinations of Lutheran heretics, Turkish infidels, and perfidious Frenchmen. To refute the more specific charge that he was aiming at “tyranny” over Italy, he pointed to his willingness to entrust Milan to a friendly third party (this too had been part of Gattinara’s teaching), rather than claiming it for himself, even though Milan was an imperial fief.³¹ Yet if one makes allowances for ordinary political suspicions, the informal hegemony that Charles maintained in Italy, so long as he ruled in Naples and had disposition over Milan, was not very different from the tyranny that Italian states feared.³² Similarly, when Charles presented himself as the chief defender of Christendom, refusing (for example) to share with France’s Francis I the command of a proposed expedition against the Turks,³³ was he acting on behalf of Christendom, or on behalf of the House of Austria? This question, perhaps never answered clearly even in Charles’s own mind, shadowed his reign as emperor from the first years until the end.

One may also put the question more concretely: was Charles the paladin of Christendom, faithfully defending the Catholic Church against all its enemies, despite the perfidy of some Catholic princes? Or were France’s Valois monarchs, Francis I and Henry II, the defenders of Europe’s liberty against the overweening ambition of an Alexander *redivivus*? The Habsburg-Valois rivalry, the key to many other strategic issues, is complicated enough to require a separate discussion (see Chapter 2).

³⁰ Charles’s report of his speech: to Hannart, his ambassador to France, 17 April 1536, in Lanz, Letter 428, II, 226. See the comment by Fernández Álvarez, *Corpus Documental*, at Letter CXCVII, I, 490–491. Cf. Francis I’s oblique characterization of Charles’s motives, as reported by Granvelle: “Those who desire peace in Christendom can see that, for his [Francis’s] part, he makes no claim to monarchie”: Granvelle to Charles, 31 March 1528, Lanz, Letter 107, I, 265–270; and Charles’s instructions for Montfoort on his mission to Ferdinand, 3 April 1529, referring to Suleyman’s “insaciable apetito de hazerse monarcha y senor universal,” in *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 279, III, 386–396.

³¹ See the minute of Charles’s council (1523) cited in note 28; also Charles to Clement VII, 18 September 1526, Lanz, Letter 94, I, 219–221; Ferdinand (who wanted Milan for himself) to Charles, 31 May 1527, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 69, II, 85–88; and Charles to Isabella, 18 April 1536, *Corpus Documental*, Letter CXCVII, I, 488–489.

³² For a recent Italian overview of the Wars of Italy (1494–1559), Susanna Peyronel Rambaldi, “Milano nel tempo delle guerre d’Italia,” in Franco Della Peruta, ed., *Storia illustrata di Milano* (7 vols., Milan, 1992–1997), IV, 981–1000.

³³ A point made by Mia Rodríguez-Salgado, “Obeying the Ten Commandments: Charles V and France in the 1520s,” in Blockmans and Mout, *The World of Charles V*.

“*Conjuncture*”

In each of Charles's realms, subjects and councillors alike thought in terms of settled interests that changed little from one reign to the next, like fending off raids by North African corsairs along the Spanish and Neapolitan coasts, or, in the Low Countries, turning back incursions by Rhenish princes allied with France. By contrast, the discussions within Charles's inner circle were dominated by a keen sense of *conjuncture*, meaning an ephemeral constellation of circumstances favorable or adverse to particular interests of the dynasty. Thus in 1523 Charles hoped to time his planned departure for Italy to coincide with the announcement by the constable of Bourbon, a prince of the blood royal, that he was renouncing his allegiance to France; “con aquella bona conyuntura,” Charles believed, one could hope for good results against the French in Italy. In 1528, just after a large French force attacking Naples had been defeated, Charles urged Ferdinand to take advantage of “les choses advenues en si bonne conjuncture” by attacking France from the east. In 1535, having just conquered Tunis, Charles and his advisers considered an immediate strike against Algiers, the new corsair base in North Africa, because “en esta conyuntura con la reputacion de la victoria” one could accomplish the objective “more easily than at other times.” In 1545, sensing that the warring kings of France and England both desired peace, Charles wrote Mary that “la vraye conjuncture” had come for advancing Habsburg interests by mediating a truce between the two.³⁴ To judge from their correspondence, Charles and his entourage thought of the dynasty not so much as having settled interests but as being confronted with constantly shifting perils and opportunities. Thus, although incoming letters pleading for the abiding concerns of the various realms were always received courteously, the tacit understanding was that a problem could only be addressed when the time was ripe.

Going to War, and Building an Army

On military issues, the inner circle, representing in the aggregate an impressive experience of war and politics in various parts of Europe, tried to help Charles guess where the dynasty's resources might best be allocated. Was the king of France likely to go to war in the coming campaign season? And would the pope and other Italian princes of dubious loyalty support him if he did? When hostile armies were already mobilizing the questions were more pressing: were the troops massing in the south of

³⁴ Charles to Soria, 14 December 1523, *Corpus Documental*, Letter XIX, I, 88–89; Charles's instructions for Montfoort, 8 October 1528, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 232, vol. II, 301–303; Charles to Soria, 16 August 1535, *Corpus Documental* CLXXXI, II, 441–444; Charles to Mary, 6 August 1543, HHSA-B, PA 42, Konvolutz; cf. Alba to Cobos, 4 October 1545, *Corpus Documental*, Letter CCCXXXII, II, 426.

France intended for a strike across the Alps, or across the Pyrenees; and would the great army the sultan was raising march this year against his foe to the east, the Shah of Iran, or against Habsburg Austria? Reports from Charles's ambassadors and from other sources³⁵ were read aloud and weighed against the experience of those present. It goes almost without saying that a decision to expect or initiate hostilities in one quarter always entailed a complementary decision to avoid war on other fronts. For example, when Charles anticipated a renewal of war with France, he would send instructions to Ferdinand to seek a truce with the Ottomans and, likewise, with Janos Zapolyai, the Transylvanian magnate who, backed by the Sublime Porte, contested Ferdinand's claim to the Hungarian crown.³⁶ When Charles planned a naval campaign against Tunis or Algiers, Mary of Hungary in Brussels would be instructed to bend over backward to avoid giving France any excuse to invade the Low Countries.

The likely theater of conflict being identified, it remained to determine what level of forces was required. As the reign advanced, so too did the size of the armies required. France's use of siege artillery in successive invasions of Italy (starting in 1494), battering down with little trouble the high curtain walls of medieval towns, had changed the character of warfare. In response, Italian military architects created a new system of fortification involving low, earth-backed walls, which could absorb the impact of shot, and triangular projections (bastions), which were used both for flanking fire along the walls and for the emplacement of cannon to keep besiegers at a distance. Owing to its great expense, the so-called *trace italienne* spread only slowly from northern Italy to the rest of Europe. But even if present only here and there, such fortifications meant that armies had to be much larger in order to reduce important towns. King Charles VIII of France had invaded Italy with 18,000 men in 1494, but Francis I led a force of 32,000 across the Alps in 1525, and Henry II had 40,000 under his command when he captured the imperial city of Metz in 1552.³⁷

Deciding what kinds of troops to engage – especially the infantry – was at least as important as deciding how many men were needed. By twice

³⁵ E.g., Giovan Battista Lomellino, governor of the province of Bari and Otranto and marquis of Atripalda, who frequently collected and passed on directly to Charles information from his network of spies and informants about Ottoman provinces on the other side of the Adriatic: José Maria de Morial, *El Virrey de Napoles Don Pedro de Toledo y la guerra contra el Turco* (Madrid, 1966), 61–80.

³⁶ At the death of Louis Jagiello (battle of Mohács, 1526), Mary of Hungary's brother, Ferdinand, claimed the crowns of both Bohemia and Hungary, according to the terms of a Habsburg-Jagiello marriage treaty of 1515. In Bohemia his claim was not disputed. In Hungary he was able to establish his authority in some parts of the kingdom that had not fallen under Ottoman control after 1526. But Szapolyai's claim was backed by many among the nobility and supported by the Porte.

³⁷ Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution* (Cambridge, 1988), chap. 1, "The Military Revolution Revisited." On the bastion trace, Faro, *Il sistema e la città*, and Duffy, *Siege Warfare*.

trouncing Charles's great-grandfather, Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy (d. 1477), the Swiss opened a new age in European warfare, dominated by infantry. The men of the Swiss cantons, planting their fifteen-foot pikes, could stop any cavalry charge; massed in great phalanxes and trained to charge in unison, they could break any enemy line. Under the aegis of Ferdinand of Aragón, Charles's maternal grandfather, Spain's commanders developed improvements on Swiss tactics, especially during the war that resulted in the conquest of Granada, Iberia's last Muslim principality (1492). Instead of being massed in phalanxes, the infantry comprised smaller units or companies, each of which included a number of men – perhaps a sixth – armed with arquebuses. In battle, *arcabuceros* and field artillery were positioned between squares of pikemen, to have a clear field of fire. The efficacy of this formation was proven anew when Ferdinand's commander in Italy, Gonsalvo de Córdoba, ended the brief French occupation of Naples and claimed the kingdom for Ferdinand (1503). While French cavalry outnumbered the infantry two to one, as was common in medieval armies, Gonsalvo's infantry outnumbered his cavalry three to one. This was to be the pattern for Charles V's wars.³⁸

During the first decade or so of Charles's reign, it became common to organize infantry companies of 300 to 500 men in groups of ten, under a senior captain with the title of *maestre de campo*. In a military ordinance issued following his failed campaign into Provence (Genoa, October 1536), Charles, in speaking of his Spanish infantry, refers for the first time to the *tercio* of Naples and Sicily, the *tercio* of Lombardy, and the *tercio* of Malaga (men recruited for the Tunis campaign who had fought also in Provence). According to René Quatrefages, it is not clear that in this text the term has anything more than its literal meaning, that is, the “third” of the infantry based in Naples and Sicily, the third based on Lombardy, and so on. Very soon, however, a *tercio* came to mean a regiment of ten companies under a *maestre de campo*. There were to be roughly 300 men per company, while two of the ten companies were now made up entirely of *arcabuceros*.³⁹

To Charles's subjects, for whom foreign soldiers of any kind were a curse, Spaniards were no better than the rest. When he saw the havoc wreaked by a Spanish contingent near Krems in Austria (1532), Roelx for once found peasant complaints about the passage of armies all too believable. Mary of Hungary would have preferred Germans to the Spaniards

³⁸ For the best account of these developments, see René Quatrefages, “L'organisation militaire de l'Espagne, 1492–1592,” Thèse de doctorat, Université de Paris-IV, 1989; Luis A. Ribot Garcia, “Les types d'armée en Espagne au début des temps modernes,” in Philippe Contamine, ed., *Guerre et concurrence entre les États européens du XIV^e au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1998), 52–53.

³⁹ Quatrefages, “L'organisation militaire de l'Espagne,” 311–347; R. Trevor Davies, *The Golden Century of Spain* (New York, 1965), 22–24.

Charles sent for the defense of the Low Countries (1543), because they were easier to send home once the campaigning season was over. Towns in Naples sometimes rioted against their Spanish garrisons, and the kingdom's Parlamento demanded cancellation of the special tax that was levied in their support.⁴⁰ But Charles and his military advisers regarded the Spanish infantry to be without peer in battle conditions. Following the great victory at Pavia (1525; see Chapter 2), Lannoy said that despite not having been paid for three months, his Spaniards "did wonders, and in one charge they won the day." Five years later Charles hoped the 2,000 Spaniards he sent from his Italian garrisons might help Ferdinand reconquer the portions of Hungary now controlled by the Ottomans.⁴¹ To be sure, the reputation of Spain's fighting men led to conflicting demands for their use. In 1543 the emperor wanted 2,000 men who had just returned from Spain's North African outposts sent on to Italy. But Philip, speaking for the Consejo de Estado, insisted that they were needed for the key Pyrenees border town of Perpignan, threatened by the French. Bowing to necessity, Charles countermanded his order because "the seas are not safe" for bringing men to Italy.⁴²

Swiss pikemen would have been the best alternative. In France they commanded a better wage than the highly sought south German *Landsknechte*.⁴³ Charles carefully maintained the treaty of friendship the Austrian side of his family had concluded with the Swiss Confederation, but he could not match the pensions that kept leading men of various cantons loyal to France and assured Swiss regiments for any French force marching into Italy.⁴⁴ Instead, Charles's recruiters turned to the densely populated countryside of south Germany – High Germany, for contemporaries, as distinct

⁴⁰ Rouelx to Charles, 6 September 1532, Lanz, Letter 290, II, 5; Mary to Charles, 24 February 1543, Aud., 54, 22–25v (see also Charles to Mary, 25 July 1545, HHSA-B, PA 42, Konvolut 2, authorizing 15,000 Holland pounds for damages to civilian property done by these same Spaniards); Hernando Sanchez, *Castilla y Napoles*, 389, and D'Agostino, *Parlamento e società, nel regno di Napoli*, 282, 296.

⁴¹ Lannoy to Charles, 25 February 1525, Lanz, Letter 62, I, 153–154; Charles to Isabella, 8 July 1530, *Corpus Documental*, Letter LXXVI, I, 218.

⁴² Philip to Charles, 7 August 1543, *Corpus Documental*, Letter CCLIX, II, 143; Charles to Phillip, 27 October 1543, *Corpus Documental*, Letter CCLXII, II, 167. According to I. A. A. Thompson, *War and Government in Habsburg Spain, 1560–1620* (London, 1976), 104, it was not until the 1570s that it became difficult to find new recruits for Spain's *tercios*.

⁴³ Hamon, *L'argent du roi*, 26: in 1523, Swiss mercenaries were paid seven livres tournois a month, south German *Landsknechte* six, and French *aventuriers* five.

⁴⁴ Charles to Ferdinand, 25 May 1524, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 69, I, 131–133; Ferdinand to Charles, 4 May 1525, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 139, I, 296; and Cornelis de Schepper to Charles, 17 December 1531, Lanz, Letter 256, I, 636–637. Hamon, *L'argent du roi*, 53, estimates pensions to private persons in Switzerland during the reign of Francis I at between 40,000 and 50,000 ecus per year.

from the Lowland plains of the north. The key for tapping into this pool of manpower was to keep “military enterprisers” on one’s payroll.⁴⁵ Charles either had Ferdinand make arrangements for him or, as in 1534, instructed his special envoy to Germany to meet with the “supreme captains” or “colonels,” each of whom was to have ten “captains” ready if needed to command a “banner” of (usually) 400 men. These commander-recruiters had the trust of men who had fought with them, and they also had sufficient credit to keep the men marching when money from the emperor’s paymasters ceased to flow. One colonel, Franz von Thamise, complained of having to keep fifteen banners of men at his own expense for seven weeks.⁴⁶

Even an army mainly composed of infantry still needed cavalry support. Charles could recruit heavy cavalry in Germany, in the same way he recruited *Landsknechte*, or he could call upon his *guardas* in Castille, or his *compagnies d’ordonnance* in the Low Countries. For light cavalry, needed for scouting and for mobility, he had *jinetes* from Spain or Italy, but his recruiting ranged far afield, sometimes extending to Poland or Albania. He also needed engineers to supervise field works and cannoneers for the siege guns, not to mention wagoneers to manage the artillery and supply trains, and “pioneers” to do the labor of entrenching that soldiers often scorned. Nonetheless, in this age of infantry, if his *tercios* were en route to the designated point of assembly, and his military enterprisers had the recruitment of *Landsknechte* well in hand, Charles knew he had the basic building blocks for a successful strike force – if, that is, that the men who had sworn fealty to him would be paid well enough to continue marching under the imperial standard.

“Putting My Own Person at Risk”

Though deemed more reliable than their Low German counterparts,⁴⁷ High German *Landsknechte* could cause a great deal of trouble if neither the emperor’s paymasters nor their own commanders were able to pay their wages. In the terminology of the era, a “pay” (*paye* or *paga*) was a month’s wages for one man – for example, 4 Rhine gulden (2.83 Spanish ducats)

⁴⁵ Redlich, *The German Military Enterpriser*.

⁴⁶ Roland von Hemste (brother of Franz von Hemste, also known as Thamise) to Charles, 7 April 1536, Lanz, Letter 423, II, 218–219.

⁴⁷ Praet to Charles, 24 September 1542, assessing the fighting qualities of various contingents raised by Mary, Lanz, Letter 498, II, 264–267: there are some good men among the Low Germans, but “some of them are very badly trained [*conditionez*] and disobedient”; Mary to Granvelle, 1 July 1545, HHSA-B, PA 41, Konvolut 1, attempting to dissuade Charles from the war against German Protestants he now contemplated: High German troops could not be trusted [presumably because of Lutheranism], but Low Germans (Anabaptists and Sacramentarians) would be worse – could one truly pursue a holy cause by employing such execrable men?

for a foot soldier.⁴⁸ Conscious of the demand for their services, mercenaries sometimes held their employers to ransom. In 1526 a force of High Germans at Cartagena refused to embark for Italy unless guaranteed 15,000 “pays” per month, instead of the 12,000 for which they had contracted. In 1528 the banner captains themselves threatened to lead a pillage of Buda, still loyal to Ferdinand, unless their arrears were satisfied. In 1529 men who had just helped withstand the Turkish siege of Vienna cried out “money or blood,” demanding 5 pays at once, without subtracting (as was usual) for the food they had consumed and the rooms they had occupied. In 1543 the German troops holding Düren for Charles threatened to surrender the town to the duke of Cleves, the emperor’s enemy, if they were not paid.⁴⁹

Particularly embarrassing were the occasions when an army of *Landsknechte* jumped the traces altogether. The German force recruited by Ferdinand for the constable of Bourbon to lead into Italy on Charles’s behalf in 1523 “broke up” of its own accord, either because Ferdinand was too far away to keep them in line (as Charles suggested), or because Bourbon had failed to provide the cavalry arm on which infantry depended for its safety. The same thing happened with troops sent to Italy under Duke Henry of Brunswick in 1528, either “because of the machinations of our enemies” (as Charles was told) or simply from want of pay.⁵⁰ The worst such incident occurred in 1527, when a large and poorly paid force in Lombardy refused orders to march to the aid of Naples, then besieged by the French. Instead, the mixed army of Germans and Spaniards and Italians, nominally under Bourbon’s command, cut a swath of destruction through the Papal States, culminating in the frightful Sacco di Roma (see Chapter 2).⁵¹

⁴⁸ Charles to Ferdinand, 5 October 1531, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 553, IV, 367–369; eight banners of High Germans, with 400 men each, were reckoned at 4,320 “pays,” since for each banner one had to count 40 “lost pays” (320 in all) for the salaries of captains, flag bearers, sergeants, and provosts. Each man was to receive 4 Rhine gulden for a month calculated at thirty days. Spanish infantry on garrison duty in Naples at this time received 3.25 Spanish ducats per month: Morial, *El Virrey de Napoles y la guerra contro il Turco*, 111.

⁴⁹ Lannoy’s instructions for J. Durant, 17 May 1527, Lanz, Letter 284, I, 692–694; Mary to Ferdinand, 23 August 1528, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 216, II, 278–282; Ferdinand’s instructions for Salinas, after 16 November 1529, *Corpus Documental*, Letter XLVII, I, 179–180; Mary to Charles, 4 January 1543, Aud. 54, 8–9v.

⁵⁰ Charles to Ferdinand, December 1523, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 48, I, 78–79, and Hannart to Charles, 13 March 1524, Lanz, Letter 52, I, 108–109; Charles to Ferdinand, 9 October 1528, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 234, II, 308–314, and Charles’s instructions for Sanchez, 8 November 1528, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 240, II, 328–329.

⁵¹ Lannoy’s instructions for Durant, 27 May 1527, Lanz, Letter 284, I, 702–705; De Veyre to Charles, 30 September 1527, Lanz, Letter 101, I, 249–251; Charles to Ferdinand, 27 November 1527, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 130, II, 148–152. For the ensuing propaganda war, focusing on whether

Disasters like this will have given Charles occasion to ponder whether he might not have a better chance of holding troops together if he commanded them in person. But whether the emperor should “put my own person at risk” in this way was perhaps the most contentious of all the questions Charles and his advisers had to settle. The hazards were only too obvious. In 1529, when it became clear that Charles was resolved to lead a campaign in Italy, Margaret of Austria tried to warn him off by recalling recent history: in 1477 their ancestor, Duke Charles the Bold, brought shame and defeat on the House of Burgundy by leading his army against superior forces in a vain attempt to conquer Lorraine; in 1494 France’s Charles VIII marched the length of Italy to conquer Naples, only to see victory melt away as his army, decimated by malaria, was forced into an ignominious retreat. In 1538, when Charles communicated a secret plan to lead an armada against Istanbul, the very citadel of the Grand Turk, Mary of Hungary besought him to think how he would answer before God for what might befall Christendom, not to mention his own family, if such an expedition were to meet disaster. In 1543, learning of Charles’s decision to lead his troops into battle in the Rhineland, Mary again begged her brother to consider how much depended on the safety of his person. Charles’s reply was nicely attuned to the fighting spirit of a woman who, during the previous campaign season, had done everything but mount a horse and lead men into the fray herself: “I promise you I will do nothing you would not do, if you were in my place.”⁵²

Charles faced competing demands. On one hand, the Consejo de Estado in Valladolid threw cold water on almost any scheme that would have Castile’s monarch gallivanting off to foreign parts.⁵³ On the other hand, his presence was insistently required wherever a Habsburg realm suffered enemy invasion. For example, in 1538, Mary of Hungary withheld the just-mentioned letter about Charles’s plan for Istanbul from her Council of State, lest councillors “despair” when they grasped that Charles would not be coming to the Low Countries to lead them in repelling the French. In November 1542, having turned back a French invasion but expecting another in the spring, Mary shamed Charles into promising to come the

the *Landsknechte* were or were not acting under orders from Charles, see John Headley, *The Emperor and His Chancellor: A Study in the Imperial Chancery under Gattinara* (Cambridge, 1983), 110–113.

⁵² Margaret to Charles, 26 May 1529, Lanz, Letter 117, I, 302–303; Mary to Charles, August 1538, *Staatspapiere*, Document LIIV, 265–266 (the planned expedition against Istanbul never took place); Mary to Charles, 29 October 1543, Lanz, Letter 513, II, 404; Charles to Mary, 30 October 1543, Lanz, Letter 514, II, 405. For Mary’s conduct of the defense of the Low Countries against simultaneous invasions from France and the Rhineland in 1542, see Doyle, “The Heart and Stomach of a King but the Body of a Woman,” chap. 7.

⁵³ E.g., Consulta of the Consejo de Estado, 1 May 1538, Estado 637, 94: it would be “dangerous” for Charles to go to Germany to hold an imperial diet, as the Roman Curia wanted him to do.

following year by reminding him of his pledge to deputies of the provincial states: "They say you promised them that if we sustained the first shock of combat, you would not fail to come to their aid with all your strength." At the end of 1544, hobbled by gout and preoccupied by the affairs of Germany, Charles wiggled out of a written promise to the Hungarian Diet to join Ferdinand in a campaign against the Turks the following summer, instructing his emissary, Geraard Veltwijk, not to say anything that might bind him to come in person. But Ferdinand gave Veltwijk strict orders "not to say a word to anyone" about this article of his instructions, fearing that any report that Charles was not coming might prompt Hungary's magnates to shift their allegiance to the sultan.⁵⁴

How were these conflicting priorities of the various Habsburg realms to be sorted out? Charles seems to have given special weight to two issues. The first was his sense of the needs of the dynasty. He was eager to go to Italy in the 1520s, not just because of Gattinara's exalted conception of Italy's place in the world, but because according to medieval tradition an emperor-elect could only be crowned by the pope, in Italy. As he explained to his brother, one could not think of securing Ferdinand's position in Germany by getting him recognized as King of the Romans (heir apparent) until Charles himself was crowned.⁵⁵ The second consideration, complicated enough to require separate discussion, involved the emperor's sense of his own honor and reputation.

"Honor and Reputation"

While Charles was campaigning in Provence in 1536, the Consejo de Estado deliberated on what he ought to do in the coming weeks: if Francis I should invade Italy, even more if he should invade Spain, Charles's "honor" required confronting his enemy on the field of battle; if not, he should return to Spain, the sooner the better. In 1542, hearing that Francis was leading an army against Perpignan, to be supported from the sea by Turkish galleys, Charles wrote Tavera, "I have determined to put my own person at risk" to oppose him (in the event, he did not). In 1543, on the point of departing for a campaign against the imperial princes in the Rhineland who had joined with France in attacking the Low Countries, he explained his reasoning in a secret instruction for Philip:

⁵⁴ Mary to Charles, August 1538, cited in note 52; Mary to Charles, 28 November 1542, Aud. 53, 342v–343; Veltwijk to Charles, 11 December 1544, Lanz, Letter 529, II, 419–420, and Charles to Ferdinand, 15 January 1545, HHSA-B, PA 5, Konvolut 1.

⁵⁵ Charles to Ferdinand, 26 March 1525, *Familienkorrespondenz*, Letter 133, I, 178; Consulta of the Consejo de Estado, November 1526, *Corpus Documental*, Letter XXIV, I, 117–118. Fernández Álvarez notes that the crusade motif was stressed in official explanations for the journey to Italy Charles eventually did make in 1529: Charles's "poder" for Isabella to govern in his absence, 8 March 1529, *Corpus Documental*, Letter XXXV, I, 143–147.

I undertake this journey against my will, for the sake of honor and reputation [*honra y reputacion*], for if our vassals will not serve us, one cannot sustain the burden of governing. . . . This voyage is full of danger for my honor and reputation, for my life and for my house; and may it please God it is not dangerous also for my soul, as I trust it is not, for I undertake it with good intention, to provide a remedy for preserving what has been given me, and not to leave you, my son, poor and robbed of authority. . . . Believe that what I do has been forced upon me to preserve my honor, for without it my ability to govern and your inheritance will be diminished.⁵⁶

The same logic applied to Charles's understanding of his position as Christendom's anointed leader in the age-long struggle against Islamdom. In April 1532, writing from Regensburg, Charles outlined for Isabella a scenario that would delay his return to Spain: "In view of my obligation to defend the faith and the Christian religion, and finding myself here [in Germany], I have decided that if the Turk comes in person, which he can only do at the head of a great force, I will go forth with all the forces I can find to resist him." In the ensuing months Sultan Suleyman did in fact lead a large army against Austria. True to his word, Charles joined Ferdinand at the head of a huge Christian war flotilla that embarked at Regensburg for the voyage downriver to Vienna, only to find that the Ottoman army had already withdrawn (see Chapter 7).⁵⁷ In the summer of 1534 Kheir-ad-Din Barbarossa, captain general of the Ottoman fleet, commanded a fleet of seventy galleys that raided at will along the north coast of Sicily and the west coast of Naples before turning south to occupy Tunis, which Barbarossa clearly intended to use as a base for further operations. It was the humiliation dealt him by Barbarossa's voyage that led Charles to take personal command of the armada against North Africa that had been discussed for several years and was now to be directed against Tunis (1535; Chapter 7).⁵⁸

In the sixteenth century, subjects all across Europe groaned under the weight of war taxation. Historians doubt that the cumulative fiscal burden was in fact greater than it had been in the past, adjusting for inflation,⁵⁹ but there is no mistaking the resentment and sense of hardship provoked

⁵⁶ Consulta of the Consejo de Estado, October 1536, Lanz, Letter 446, II, 263–267; Charles to Tavera, 26 July 1542, *Corpus Documental*, Letter CCXLIV, II, 78–79; Charles's secret instruction for Philip, 6 May 1543, *Corpus Documental*, Letter CCLII, II, 105 (unlike the "ostensible instruction," to be shared with the Consejo, this document was to be kept by Philip under lock and key, to be seen by no one, except in the event of Charles's death, in which case it was to be read aloud to the Cortes).

⁵⁷ Charles to Isabella, the second of two letters dated 6 April 1532, *Corpus Documental*, Letter CXXXVIII, I, 350–351.

⁵⁸ Morial, *El Virrey de Napoles Don Pedro de Toledo*, 99–100, 169–172.

⁵⁹ Juan Gelabert, "The Fiscal Burden," in Bonney, *Economic Systems and State Finance*, 539–576, especially, the section on "The Fiscal Burden in the Sixteenth Century," 557–564.

by taxes that were at least nominally higher. Yet subjects complained even more about a ruler who suffered his territory to be invaded with impunity. “Honor and reputation” was thus a precious asset for the ruler and his lands, not a mere chivalric fantasy. It was, in effect, the keystone in a conceptual arch forming the grand strategy that guided Charles and his advisers.